

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) An implant for placement between vertebrae, comprising: two sidepieces joined together at one end and free at another end, each of the sidepieces being placeable against one of the vertebrae; a device for vertical distraction of the sidepieces, outside surfaces of the sidepieces that face the vertebrae and at least stages of inner surfaces of the side pieces being configured to converge towards the free ends of the sidepieces in an initial position for the distraction; and a spreading element arranged between the sidepieces for spreading apart the sidepieces, wherein the spreading element is a slider mounted so as to be capable exclusively of translatory motion and wherein, in a spread-apart state of the sidepieces, the slider rests against the sidepieces over an entire horizontal width thereof, and wherein, for spreading apart the sidepieces, the slider is movable from a location where the sidepieces are joined together toward the free ends of the sidepieces.

2. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 1, wherein the joined sidepieces are made from a single piece of material which is deformable for the distraction.

3. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 2, wherein the joined sidepieces are made from a single piece of plastic.

4. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 3, wherein the plastic is polyetheretherketone (PEEK).

5. (Canceled)

6. (Canceled)

7. (Previously Presented) The implant in accordance with claim 1, wherein, an opening is formed at an end of the implant opposite from the free ends of the sidepieces for passage of a tool, which operates the slider as needed.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~The implant in accordance with claim 1,~~ An implant for placement between vertebrae, comprising: two sidepieces joined together at one end and free at another end, each of the sidepieces being placeable against one of the vertebrae; a device for vertical distraction of the sidepieces, outside surfaces of the sidepieces that face the vertebrae and at least stages of inner surfaces of the side pieces being configured to converge towards the free ends of the sidepieces in an initial position for the distraction; and a spreading element arranged between the sidepieces for spreading apart the sidepieces, wherein the

spreading element is a slider mounted so as to be capable exclusively of translatory motion and wherein, in a spread-apart state of the sidepieces, the slider rests against the sidepieces over an entire horizontal width thereof, and wherein, for spreading apart the sidepieces, the slider is movable from a location where the sidepieces are joined together toward the free ends of the sidepieces, wherein the slider locks in an end position in which the sidepieces are spread.

9. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 8, wherein the slider locks releasably in the end position.

10. (Previously Presented) The implant in accordance with claim 1, wherein the slider is flush with an outer surface of the implant in an end position in which the sidepieces are spread.

11. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 1, wherein the implant is configured for placement in a lateral half-space between two vertebrae together with another implant, which shows mirror symmetry with respect to the first implant and is placeable in the other half-space.

12. (Original) The implant in accordance with claim 1, wherein the implant has a vertical opening formed as an oblong hole in which the slider is guided.